



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield
(202) 224-6770

Wednesday, June 20, 2007

ENZI, REPUBLICANS CHALK UP SUCCESS ON EDUCATION BILLS

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today said the Senate is making progress in advancing bills that will provide life-long learning opportunities for all Americans, from pre-school through graduate school and the workplace – thanks to the efforts of Republican lawmakers working to keep Congress focused on what matters most to working families.

“My Republican colleagues and I have worked diligently to advance strong, bipartisan legislation to renew and improve education programs that effect Americans throughout their lifetimes, from pre-school through graduate school and beyond,” Enzi said. “We have rolled up our sleeves and gone to work with our Democratic colleagues to address the interests and needs of students, while also ensuring that these bills are fiscally sound and responsible.”

Enzi noted that Republican ideas have strongly influenced education bills that Congress is moving forward on this year, including legislation on American competitiveness, Head Start, higher education, and K-12 education.

“When the Senate approved the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Act by an 88-8 vote in April, I saw that as proof positive that when we are willing to set partisan politics aside and work together, we can do great things for the American people. That was an encouraging starting point, and since then we have continued to work together in this bipartisan spirit to ensure that every American has the opportunity to achieve academically and obtain the skills needed to succeed in the global economy.

“Yesterday, the Senate unanimously approved a bill to renew and improve Head Start programs for disadvantaged children after months of negotiations. Republican efforts ensured that this bill will increase the accountability of Head Start programs by strengthening the role of Head Start governing bodies, while preserving the role of the policy councils and parents in the operation of Head Start programs. This bill will ensure that disadvantaged students can enter school on an even playing field, ready to learn and succeed.

“Today, the HELP Committee overwhelmingly approved two bills to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. The bill makes college more affordable and provides key reforms to restore trust in the student loan industry. It also ensures that students and parents have the information they need about the costs of college and the impact of their loans to make sound decisions about their futures.

“I look forward to bringing these bills to the full Senate and working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find ways they can be improved. I welcome their suggestions as we work to ensure that the final bills we pass in the Senate are as strong and as responsible as they can be.”

Enzi said that Members of the HELP Committee and their staffs are now in the early stages of negotiating the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and that he hopes the reauthorization process will allow the Senate to address several Republican concerns with certain provisions of the bill.

“I look forward to working with my colleagues to build on what we have learned since implementing NCLB 5 years ago in order to pass a bill that will ensure quality education opportunities for all students, while giving states, districts, schools and teachers the flexibility they need to meet their unique needs.”

####